COMMANDERS DIGEST

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE • WASHINGTON, D.C.

Vol. 3, No. 44 June 3, 1967

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JUN 28 1967
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Marine Commandant Calls M-16 Rifle 'Fine Weapon'

Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Wallace M. Greene Jr., has termed the M-16 rifle well suited for the jungle-type warfare presently encountered in Vietnam.

The Commandant said during a May 26 news conference at the Pentagon that he wished to correct some misconceptions about the weapon, stating "the M-16 has proven to be a reliable, hard-hitting, lightweight weapon for our troops."

Gen. Greene said that historically new weapons have encountered some problems of acceptance among individual members of the Marine Corps, but that the consensus appeared to be that there was no question that the M-16 is a fine weapon.

He said there have been malfunctions, pointing out that no weapon is perfect. Gen. Greene added, however, that stoppages were probably due to the failure of men to:

- Lubricate the M-16 more than other weapons because it is a more "sophisticated" rifle;
- Refrain from overloading the 17-18 round magazine, a step that would make a malfunction an almost certainty;
- Refrain from firing the M-16 like a heavy machine gun in long bursts, pointing out that short 2-3 shot bursts were best.

Because of the occasional malfunctions, Gen. Greene said, the Marine Corps plans to modify the weapon. Modifications would include a new buffer group to slow the rate of fire and chrome plating of the weapon's chamber.

Gen. Greene said the M-16 had been extensively tested by the Marine Corps before the first of an estimated 200,000 of these weapons were issued to reconnaissance and infantry battalions in March.

Resource Management System Operational July 1

Army's Resource Management System is scheduled to become operational July 1 and courses have been completed at Army Management School, Ft. Belvoir, Va., for senior civilian and military personnel orientation.

These courses were directed toward background, concepts and scope and to identify and discuss actions to be taken before the July date.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE — President Johnson presents the Distinguished Service Medal to Air Force Maj. Gen. James W. Humphreys Jr., at a White House ceremony, May 24, as Under Secretary of the Air Force Norman S. Paul looks on. Gen. Humphreys was cited for "creating a national health program which revolutionized treatment and care of the sick in Vietnam and increased the survivability of persons wounded or ill in the villages and rural areas," while serving as Director for Public Health, U.S. Agency for International Development, in Vietnam from June 1965 to May 1967.

Regular Air Force Officers May Face Extended Tours Under New Program

A selective retention program for Air Force Regular officers, colonels and below, has been initiated to meet the needs of the service.

The deferment of resignations or retirements normally will not exceed 12 months from the requested effective date.

All voluntary retirement applications and resignations of Regular officers affected by this program will be reviewed by the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force.

Deferments will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis following a selective review of each officer's professional skills as compared to current and programmed Air Force requirements.

Applications from Regular officers which have been approved will be honored. However, those not approved but in process will be selectively reviewed by a Personnel Council acting for the Secretary of the Air Force.

Washington Memos

TWENTY-TWO MEMBERS of Central Treaty Organization's Permanent Military Deputies Group recently visited Ft. Rucker, Ala. Group included high ranking officers from Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, Britain and United States. They were briefed on organization and mission of Army's Aviation Center and School, and viewed a static display of available helicopter weapons systems.

TOTAL NUMERICAL STRENGTH of Armed Forces was 3,372,800 on April 30, based on preliminary reports. This represents 1,700 increase from preceding month. Service breakdown is Army—1,436,489; Navy—752,935; Marine Corps—281,636; and Air Force —901,740.

NEW PRESIDENT OF National Student Nurses' Association will be commissioned Army Nurse Corps second lieutenant in December. Barbara Lynn Michelson, Boise, Idaho, is enrolled in Army Student Nurse Program.

STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND personnel stationed in Nebraska will join celebration of the state's 100th Anniversary June 18 at Offutt AFB. Along with the state celebration, 20th anniversary of the U.S. Air Force, as a separate service, will be observed.

MARINER VENUS LAUNCH period will begin on June 14 from Cape Kennedy, Fla. Opportunity to launch to Venus comes once every 19 months. Mariner's looping flight to Venus will cover 212.5 million miles. Flight time to Venus will vary from 114 to 130 days depending on the day of launch, which covers a period of about two weeks. An Atlas-Agena D vehicle will be used for the launch.

ARMY LT. GEN. Ben Harrell was presented Distinguished Service Medal (First Oak Leaf Cluster) by Army Chief of Staff Gen. Harold K. Johnson, on Gen. Harrell's reassignment from CG, U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, to CG, Sixth U.S. Army. He was cited for "eminently meritorious service" commanding Army's "Idea Command", a principal effort for designing the Army of 20-25 years in the future.

MORE THAN 280,000 persons have received assistance from some 120 Army Community Service Centers set up Army-wide since program was started less than two years ago.

BRIG. GEN. HERBERT G. BENCH, USAF, has been named deputy chief of staff of the Army-Air Force Exchange Service. Gen. Bench will be senior Air Force member of the service, headquartered at Dallas, Tex.

ARPA DEPUTY DIRECTOR Dr. Peter Franken was appointed in late May as Acting Director of DOD's Advanced Research Projects Agency, succeeding Dr. Charles M. Herzfeld, who resigned to become technical director of IT&T's Nutley, N.J., Defense-Space Group facility. Dr. Franken, 39, came to DOD only last January from research and academic position at University of Michigan.

NEW JERSEY AIR National Guard's 108th Tactical Fighter Wing reports it has saved possibly $11 million—the value of two F-105 aircraft—and the lives of two pilots, through use of its "Spectrophotometer Analyzer" installed two years ago. Wing uses the equipment to test its aircraft oil samples after each flight instead of after every 10 flight hours. The 108th is first of ANG's 92 flying units to receive the equipment.

A $5.6 MILLION contract modification for M48 tank engine assemblies is being issued to Continental Motors Corp., Muskegon, Mich. Issuance is by Army Tank Automotive Command, Warren, Mich.

TACTICAL AIR COMMAND'S 431st Tactical Fighter Squadron, George AFB, Calif., has been awarded Colombian Trophy for meritorious achievement in flying safety during 1966. Trophy is awarded annually to Air Force tactical unit by Republic of Colombia.

AIR FORCE SELECTION objectives for the top two NCO grades under the monthly promotion system, July 1-Dec. 31, total 516 to E-9 and 1,363 to E-8. Selections are from the same group of eligibles who competed for the April 1 quotas.

AIR UNIVERSITY COMMANDER Lt. Gen. John W. Carpenter III, and Air War College Commandant Maj. Gen. R. A. Breitweiser hosted 14th annual National Security Forum at Air War College, Maxwell AFB, Ala. Some 75 business, industry, finance and education leaders participated in annual program which was described by AWC officials as an "exchange of mutual views . . . pertaining to future national security."

BRIGADIER GENERAL John W. Baer, a member of operations staff at Tactical Command Headquarters, Langley AFB, Va., has been named to U.S. Military Assistance Command in Thailand. Gen. Baer will be assigned as MACT Deputy Commander when he arrives at his new post in mid-June.

GEN. WESTMORELAND'S ADDRESS before Joint Session of Congress was filmed in color and will be used in "The Army Reports." It will be distributed worldwide through normal channels for Command Information Program use, probably in early June.

COMMANDERS DIGEST

Published semi-weekly by Press Division Armed Forces News Bureau, 1117 No. 19th St., Arlington, Va. 22209, a unified activity of the Directorate for Armed Forces Information and Education, OASD(M). This publication contains official information, news and policy, direct from Washington authorized sources. Reproduction of content is authorized. Suggested dateline for materials used is WASHINGTON (AFNB).

Army Cavalry Sq. Wins Presidential Unit Citation

President Johnson has awarded the Presidential Unit Citation to Army's 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, 1st Infantry Division, for extraordinary heroism against hostile forces in Binh Long Province, Vietnam, during June 8-July 9, 1966.

The squadron was cited for three significant engagements that crippled a Viet Cong division and prevented it from closing National Highway 13 and overrunning the province.

In the initial engagement Troop A was struck by three Viet Cong battalions in a marshy area affording little maneuver room. The cavalrymen, after a six-hour fight, routed the VC from their defensive emplacements.

The second engagement involved Troops B and C, which were attacked by a VC regiment. The troops were cited for a "gallant stand" resulting in "total defeat of the hostile force, whose scattered survivors fled from the battlefield."

Troops B, C and D later engaged the regiment, which had been reinforced, and "with immediately responsive and continuous support by air and cavalry, heroically stood their ground and broke the Viet Cong attack."

These engagements resulted in 712 confirmed hostile dead, an estimated 850 additional killed, and large quantities of captured weapons and equipment.

AF Completes Third Prime Mission; Cancels Scheduled Fourth Flight

Air Force's latest PRIME (Precision Recovery Including Maneuvering Entry) mission from Vandenberg AFB, Calif., was so successful that a scheduled fourth flight has been cancelled.

Results from the third PRIME mission could save from one to nearly three million dollars. Total cost of the project is $69 million.

The PRIME project, coordinated with NASA, is designed to explore the feasibility of an unmanned, maneuverable lifting body spacecraft which could return from space and "fly" to a pre-selected target area.

PRIME is part of the START (Spacecraft Technology and Advanced Re-entry Tests) program.

The SV-5D PRIME vehicle is wingless, flat-iron shaped with a slightly rounded top, flat bottom and vertical tail fins.

Col. Curtis L. Scoville, START program project officer, said that a manned vehicle similar in design to the SV-5D will be drop-tested from a mother aircraft at Edwards AFB, Calif., later this year. Capt. Jerry Gentry is the scheduled pilot.

SPACESUIT STUDY—Col. Frank Borman (center), one of nation's veteran astronauts, points out details on his spacesuit to cadets at U.S. Military Academy. The cadets were selected to attend the lecture sponsored by the academy's Department of Mechanics where Borman, a 1950 graduate of the academy, was an instructor from 1957 to 1960.

Congressional Subcommittee Appointed To Review Enlisted Promotion Policies

House Armed Services Committee Chairman L. Mendel Rivers (D-S.C.) appointed a Special Subcommittee May 24 "to conduct an Enlisted Promotional Policy Review."

Naming Rep. Alton Lennon (D-N.C.) as chairman, he said that it is time for his Committee to consider whether statutory promotion provisions should be recommended for enlisted personnel.

"Officer promotion procedures are spelled out in law," he elaborated, "Enlisted promotions, however, are governed almost entirely by regulations."

Chairman Rivers expressed concern whether enlisted personnel are getting adequate and equitable promotion opportunity, particularly those in Vietnam.

"I want to be sure that enlisted promotions don't depend, as is often alleged, on 'being in the right place at the right time,' " he said.

He also asked his subcommittee to determine why there are great variations among the services in promotion procedures and time in grade, citing the waiting time for some Air Force enlisted grades as twice as long as other services.

Chairman Rivers also instructed the subcommittee to inquire beyond promotions into a wide range of other matters from the consistency of awarding pro pay and the variable reenlistment bonus to the variation of stripes and rank designations, including the Army's specialist system.

Air Force Installs Mid-Runway Arresters At Southeast Asia Bases

Air Force runways in Southeast Asia are being equipped with mid-runway arresting barriers to save battle-damaged aircraft.

To prevent aircraft from veering off the runway, Air Force has initiated procurement action to obtain M-21 rapid recycling arresting systems mid-runway on all F-4 bases in SEA.

The M-21, a Navy design with short runout and quick recycle, can handle high deacceleration loads.

A new arresting system, the BAK-13, is under development for F-105 and other Century series aircraft which were retrofitted with tail hooks after being built.

The BAK-13 system is designed for a softer arrestment, or longer runout, than provided by M-21. First tests of the BAK-13 are scheduled in July at Edwards AFB, Calif.

AF Helicopter Achieves Communications 'First'

A U.S. Air Force UHI-F helicopter, in a flight five miles south of Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, successfully established two-way voice contact with NASA's Cooby Creek, Australia, ground station.

The communications test was conducted early this month, using NASA's ATS-I VHF communications satellite repeater in synchronous orbit over the Pacific.

Helicopter communications tests are being conducted between the Air Force Avionics Lab at Wright-Patterson and NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, Md.

The test series, supported by Air Force Systems Command's Exploratory Development Program, are being made in response to an Air Force Directorate of Space suggestion and coordinated with NASA.

THAI VISITOR—Adm. Charoon Chalermtiarana, Commander in Chief, Royal Thai Navy (left), is greeted by VAdm. Bernard F. Roeder, USN, Commander, First Fleet, upon arrival at Naval Air Station, North Island, Calif. Admiral Charoon toured military installations in the San Diego area and made an official call on Admiral Roeder in his flagship, the guided missile cruiser USS Chicago.

Polaris Submarine Force Completes 400th Patrol

Navy's Fleet Ballistic Submarine Force completed its 400th successful patrol in May following 60 days of operation by the USS Lafayette (SSBN-616).

Since the initial Polaris patrol by the USS George Washington in November 1960, more than 23,000 days of patrol vigilance have been logged.

In a message to sailors of the Polaris Fleet, Secretary of the Navy Paul Nitze said: "The contribution of this invisible, mobile sea-based weapons system is a vital factor in meeting our national objectives. Their silent shield of deterrence stands guard against nuclear holocaust by any aggressor."

There are 41 fleet ballistic submarines in commission. Twenty-eight are equipped with the 2,500 nautical mile Polaris A-3 and 13 carry the 1,500-mile A-2. Each Polaris sub is armed with 16 missiles.

Tactical Air Command To Reopen NCO Academy

Tactical Air Command's NCO Academy at Langley AFB, Va., is scheduled to reopen July 8. It was closed in October 1966 because of Southeast Asia personnel commitments.

First class will consist of 60 students, four from U.S. Air Forces in Europe (USAFE).

NCO Academy training is for five weeks, consisting of 225 hours instruction in management, communications, human relations, Air Force history, world affairs, and physical and military training.

Army Promotion Board Making W-3, W-4 Selections

An Army selection board was scheduled around May 26 to consider RA warrant officers for permanent promotion to W-3 and W-4 under title 10, U.S. Code, section 559.

Zones of consideration for promotion are all W-2s and W-3s on active duty whose date of rank is June 30, 1962, or earlier.

The Adjutant General submitted names of eligible officers to the selection board.

AFNB Press Chief Retires

Lt. Col. Frank J. Boyce, Chief, Press Division, Armed Forces News Bureau, retired last week from active duty.

A career Army information officer, Col. Boyce was founding editor of Commanders Digest and the current Armed Forces Press File while serving as Chief, Armed Forces Press Service, New York. He was awarded the Legion of Merit last March for exceptionally meritorious service.

His information career duties included Chief of Public Information, Southwest Command, Army Forces Far East; Deputy Chief of Information, U.S. Army Communications Zone Europe and Chief of Public Information Division, Headquarters, Fourth U.S. Army.

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Price 5 cents (single copy). Subscription Price: $2.50 per year; $3.25 additional for foreign mailing.

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